sea-going submarines, and his output of torpedoes, it is difficult to see. The true strategical principle would, of course, be to intercept the enemy near his exits from his ports, and from the very first days of the War the writer has been an ardent and unceasing advocate of the development of an unrestricted policy of mines, which are * the trench of the sea.[5] In the early part of the War, however, the Admiralty was utterly unsympathetic to sub-marine mining, with the result that, in the middle of the third year of the War, our provision for minelaying is utterly inadequate to the needs of the situation."

Out of 20,000 mines in store at that date, on examination it was found that only 1,500 were of any use. As one of our sailors said, when his ship accidentally bumped against one of these dud mines without an explosion : " Good old Vernon. If hit with a hammer he won't go off."*

Before the War, the Board of Admiralty had concentrated so much on big and still bigger ships that they neglected essential weapons like mines, armour-piercing shells and torpedoes—all of which were inferior to those manufactured by the German. They neglected even to provide us with sufficient small craft. The cost of one Dreadnought spent on the provision of additional destroyers would have made an appreciable difference at this date, when

we were short of patrolling and coasting vessels,

The memorandum resumes :—

"Over the system described above the convoy system, if practicable, appears to offer certain very distinct advantages.

* **H.M.S. Vernon was and is a Torpedo and Mining School at Portsmouth.**